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Report from Hongkong—Plague—Plague-infected rats.

Passed Assistant Surgeon McMullen reports, August 20, as follows: During the week ended August 15, 1903, 12 vessels, with 919 crew and 421 passengers—156 cabin and 265 steerage—were inspected and issued bills of health; 719 crew, 259 steerage passengers were bathed, and 866 pieces of baggage disinfected. Thirteen cases of plague were reported for this period, with 11 deaths (12 Chinese and 1 Indian), making a total of 1,395 since January 1, 1903. A small percentage of the rats caught show plague infection. No other communicable diseases were reported for the week.

Reports from Shanghai—Cholera and smallpox.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Ransom reports, August 19 and 24, as follows:

During the week ended August 15, 1903, there were inspected 5 vessels, 164 crew and no passengers. In the case of 1 vessel, the British bark *Dunfirmline*, the bill of health was withheld after inspection, because the captain declined to go to sea on account of some of his men having deserted, and he wished to ship hands in their places.

Communicable diseases were reported to the municipal health department for the week as follows: Smallpox, 2 deaths; diphtheria, 4 deaths; tuberculosis, 1 case. The total deaths recorded were 3 foreigners and 192 natives.

It will be noticed that cholera is not mentioned in the official report from the health department as having appeared during the week just ended. I know personally, however, of 2 cases which occurred among foreigners (Russians) from a vessel in the harbor, having seen them myself, and I have seen 2 additional cases since, all foreigners. I have also heard of several Chinese who have died of the disease.

I am endeavoring at the present time to secure some inside information on the situation, and by that information shall be guided as to the advisability of placing on wool, bristles, skin mats, feathers, etc., from this port, the restrictions in force last year. I have already issued a circular to the several shipping companies to the effect that no vegetables or fruit of any character must be taken on board here.

The disinfection of the effects of steerage passengers and crew shipped here is required the year round.

During the week ended August 22, 1903, 4 vessels, 202 crew, 25 cabin and 128 steerage passengers were inspected. The personal effects of 3 members of crew shipped here were disinfected.

Communicable diseases for the week were reported as follows: Cholera, 3 cases, 5 deaths; typhoid fever, 2 deaths; scarlet fever, 1 death; tuberculosis, 1 case. The total mortality is given as 3 foreigners and 206 natives.

An investigation of the cholera situation through channels other than the municipal health department shows that the disease is not as yet very prevalent, although there are probably a few more cases than those reported.